

NATIONAL REVIEW

¿Se Habla Ann Coulter?

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By Jay Nordlinger — July 23, 2015

Ann Coulter is bold, brash, provocative, talented, fearless, witty, and outrageous. If she were on the left, she'd be lionized. (Lionessized?) She'd be widely regarded as an adornment to society. But she is not on the left.

She is on the right, and a darling of the Right. But she does not fear to depart from the Right. (She seems not to fear anything.) For instance, she is an avid fan of Mitt Romney. (It may surprise liberals to know, but he's a *bête noire* of the Right.) And in a column last year, she blasted right-wing critics of Senator Mitch McConnell for "groupthink" and "mob behavior."

Clearly, this is a woman who thinks for herself.

She has written a string of bestsellers, which typically feature her picture on the cover and a one-word title: "Treason," "Godless," "Mugged," etc. Her latest book has her picture on the cover but not a one-word title. It's a two-word title, complete with upside-down exclamation point: *¡Adios, America!* The subtitle is "The Left's Plan to Turn Our Country into a Third World Hellhole."

From the subtitle, a person might think this book is a crazy rant, and there are crazy-rant touches, for Coulter writes flamboyantly. But this is a serious book making serious points.

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Obama Took Office

“America’s suicidal immigration policies,” writes Coulter, “are the single biggest threat facing the nation.” Every other issue, she says, pales in comparison with immigration. If immigration is not reckoned with, we will lose the country, she believes.

Her contention is that the people, or People, have long wanted a clampdown on immigration, but the elites, or Elites, have thwarted them. I’m skeptical of such arguments. I’m afraid that, in a democracy, people get what they want, or at least a majority do. But Coulter has a case.

For one thing, as she notes, it’s hard to get an “honest debate” on immigration. Question our current policies and practices, and you’re apt to be called a bigot, a xenophobe, and a racist. “If only our borders were policed as well as our speech,” writes Coulter. That is a prime example of her style.

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The Associated Press has banned the term “illegal immigrant.” Senator Rand Paul has spoken of “undocumented citizens” (perhaps inadvertently).

Coulter points out that when a gang of illegals commits a terrible crime — rape, let’s say — the media are mum about the particulars of the criminals. Their ethnicity, nationality, or immigration status, for example. But when Duke lacrosse players or University of Virginia frat boys are accused of rape — falsely — there is no reticence about the particulars. Quite the opposite.

She’s good at that: making interesting or unusual points. I’ll cite you another one:

I don’t mean to be obtuse, but why is it a crisis that illegal aliens are “living in the shadows”? . . . It is not a crisis for Americans that other people have come into their country illegally and now find it uncomfortable to be living here breaking the law. It’s *supposed* to be uncomfortable to break the law. Perhaps illegal aliens should have

considered that before coming.

Who else says that? Either in print or in private?

Day in, day out, we Americans talk about our problems: child poverty, teen pregnancy, illiteracy, crime, and so on. What we don't do, usually, is link those problems to mass immigration. And they *are* linked, Coulter argues. She has been watching these issues for a long time. In the 1990s, she worked for the Senate Judiciary Committee, specializing in problems of crime and immigration.

She says what others shrink from saying — including about the character of national culture. The melting pot has been broken apart, angrily and proudly, by the multiculturalists. Years ago, I heard my colleague Ramesh Ponnuru say something striking: It's not so much that we have an immigration problem as that we have a problem of mass illegal immigration from one country, Mexico.

Coulter pleads that she has nothing against Mexico. "Love the food!" But she has concerns (to put it mildly) about lopsided immigration from our southern neighbor.

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Incidentally, Jay Leno was complaining earlier this year about the absurd political correctness of young people. He gave an illustration. When Leno was host of *The Tonight Show*, an intern said to him, "I'm getting lunch, Mr. Leno. What would you like?" Leno said, "I don't know. Where are you going?" The intern said, "We're getting Mexican." Leno said he didn't like Mexican all that much. The intern said, "Whoa, that's kind of racist." Leno was, and remains, stunned.

The demographic transformation of California is stunning (and cautionary). It has important political implications, among others. Does anyone think that Ronald Reagan, for all his skills, could get within a mile of the governorship in today's California?

Some Democrats have been open — gleefully open — about what mass immigration means for their party's fortunes. Coulter cites a few of them, including one who exults in

“McGovern’s revenge.” (Senator George McGovern, the 1972 Democratic presidential nominee, lost 49 states to Nixon.) (It occurs to me that Watergate should have been revenge enough.)

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Reading Coulter, I thought of a Briton named Andrew Neather, who worked as an aide to Tony Blair and other Labour ministers. In 2009, he made an amazing admission: that Labour’s policy of mass immigration was intended “to make the U.K. truly multicultural,” and “to rub the Right’s nose in diversity.”

Coulter says, with characteristic aplomb — or outrageousness — “Immigration is how the Left decided to punish America.”

To most of us conservatives, it’s plain that a social-welfare state is incompatible with mass immigration. Coulter has penned a formula: “Third World immigration + massive welfare state + political correctness = *The End of America*.” She adds that “we no longer ask anything of immigrants in terms of assimilation. We can’t. That would be ‘racist.’”

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So, what to do? Coulter wants to secure the border, period. She wants to cut off illegal immigration. Only then will she entertain what to do about the millions of illegals already here. I consider this a bit of a dodge, but it’s useful, particularly to political candidates. In any event, Coulter also wants a total moratorium on immigration.

You know who else did, once upon a time? In 1995, to be exact? Arianna Huffington, who went on to great fame as the founder of the (liberal) *Huffington Post*. Twenty years ago, she was on William F. Buckley Jr.’s team in a *Firing Line* debate on immigration. She argued for a moratorium, or a “pause,” as she and her teammates called it, to allow the pot to do some melting.

Some reasonable-sounding people on Capitol Hill and elsewhere say, “Let’s do a deal: both border security and amnesty. A nice balance.” Coulter says, “Don’t make me laugh.” She’s been around too long to buy that one. She knows that, as with spending cuts and tax hikes,

you get one and not the other — i.e., neither the border security nor the spending cuts. Just the amnesty and the tax hikes.

In one of her closing flourishes, Coulter writes, “Americans love to mock the French for rolling over for Hitler, but at least they had Panzers rolling through Paris. America has chosen to do nothing as our country is taken away from us without a shot fired.”

As you have seen, she is entertaining and over-the-top. I have a high tolerance for hyperbole (especially coming from an ally). But Coulter can abuse the privilege of exaggerating, stereotyping, and insulting.

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She has occasion to recall Amadou Diallo, the 22-year-old immigrant from Guinea whom police in New York shot dead in 1999. It was a tragic misunderstanding. Coulter says that Diallo “got himself killed for not speaking the language” — he did not understand that he was supposed to put his hands up. It was “death-by-lack-of-English-skills.” I hated the political use that the Left made of the shooting, and Diallo *did* lie, flagrantly, as Coulter points out, on his asylum application. But he *is* dead.

Like Coulter, I’m an immigration restrictionist, but sometimes wincingly so. Yesterday, I was in a bank, because I needed to order new checks. The teller was a young Latina immigrant, meltingly beautiful — plus kind, winsome, and competent. “To eat,” as my grandmother would say. I thought, “I wish I could trade 20 million native-born for 20 million of her.” But such thinking is unrigorous (to be gentle with myself).

In 2003, Bill Buckley reviewed a Coulter book, deploring its excesses. But he also praised it for its “fun and shrewdness,” and even for its “mischief.” Yes. You will want to hear out Jeb Bush and the *Wall Street Journal* on immigration — they are conservatives on the other side. But you’ll want to hear out Ann, too, and you’ll enjoy doing so, I bet.

Like the guy in the movie, she’s “mad as hell” and “not going to take this anymore.” But she’s merrily mad.

Her book is dedicated to M. Stanton Evans, the beloved conservative journalist, and mentor

to many, who died earlier this year. And in the acknowledgments, where an author absolves those he thanks from responsibility for his views, she writes, “Everyone mentioned here agrees with every single word in the book. Don’t let them tell you otherwise.”

— *Jay Nordlinger is a senior editor at NATIONAL REVIEW.*

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